

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 197260 TOSEC 200230

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UNCLAS STATE 197260 TOSEC 200230

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1. HERewith ARTHUR M. COX BY-LINER COLUMN, WASHINGTON POST,
SUNDAY, AUGUST 8, HEADED "TRADE AS A WEAPON"

2. IN A RECENT INTERVIEW JIMMY CARTER TOOK A STAND WHICH,
IF IMPLEMENTED, WOULD REPRESENT A MAJOR SHIFT IN U.S. FOREIGN
POLICY. CARTER WAS ASKED: "IN THE CASE OF THE SOVIET UNION
DOING THINGS LIKE INTERVENING IN ANGOLA, WOULD YOU FAVOR
USING OUR ECONOMIC LEVERAGE AND URGING OUR ALLIES TO USE
THEIR ECONOMIC LEVERAGES TO GET THE RUSSIANS TO CEASE AND
DESIST?" HE REPLIED, "YES, I WOULD." CARTER WENT ON TO
EXPLAIN IN THE NEW YORK TIMES INTERVIEW THAT HE WOULD PUT
THE RUSSIANS ON ADVANCE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF "A
TOTAL WITHHOLDING OF TRADE." CARTER MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE
WAS TALKING ABOUT DETERRING AGGRESSIVE SOVIET FOREIGN ADVEN-
TURES AND NOT ABOUT MEASURES SUCH AS THE JACKSON AMENDMENT,
WHICH HE OPPOSES AS INTERFERENCE IN SOVIET INTERNAL AFFAIRS.
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 197260 TOSEC 200230

3. THIS APPROACH COULD HAVE A DECISIVE IMPACT ON THE COLD
WAR. AN IMPORTANT BARRIER TO THE PROGRESS OF DETENTE HAS
BEEN THE SOVIETS' UNWILLINGNESS TO ABANDON THEIR CONSPIRA-
TORIAL ACTIVITIES IN WORLD AFFAIRS. THEY DEFINE DETENTE AS

A REDUCTION OF THOSE TENSIONS WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO U.S.-SOVIET MILITARY CONFRONTATION. FOR THEM IT MEANS AN AVOIDANCE OF HOT WAR ON THE ONE HAND AND AN EXPANSION OF TRADE ON THE OTHER, ESPECIALLY THE ACQUISITION OF TECHNOLOGY AND KNOW-HOW FROM THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES. BUT DETENTE IN SOVIET EYES DOES NOT INCLUDE ABANDONING WHAT WE CALL COLD WAR, I.E. CLANDESTINE SUPPORT FOR SO-CALLED "LIBERATION MOVEMENTS," ARMS TRANSFERS AND THE FINANCING AND EQUIPPING OF PROXY FORCES, SUCH AS THE 15,000 CUBAN TROOPS SENT TO ANGOLA.

4. AT THE 25TH CONGRESS OF THE SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY LAST FEBRUARY LEONID BREZHNEV SAID: "OUR PARTY SUPPORTS AND WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT PEOPLES FIGHTING FOR THEIR FREEDOM. ... WE ACT AS WE ARE BID BY OUR REVOLUTIONARY CONSCIENCE, OUR COMMUNIST CONVICTIONS ... SOME BOURGEOIS LEADERS AFFECT SURPRISE AND RAISE A HOWL OVER THE SOLIDARITY OF SOVIET COMMUNISTS, THE SOVIET PEOPLE, WITH THE STRUGGLE OF OTHER PEOPLES FOR FREEDOM AND PROGRESS. THIS IS EITHER NAIVENESS OR MORE LIKELY A DELIBERATE BEFUDDLING OF MINDS." IN OTHER WORDS, BREZHNEV INTENDS TO PURSUE THE INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY, WHETHER IN THE MIDDLE EAST, SOUTHERN AFRICA OR SOME OTHER TROUBLE SPOT, AS LONG AS HE CAN GET AWAY WITH IT.

5. THE STANDARD U.S. RESPONSE TO SOVIET SUPPORT FOR LIBERATION STRUGGLES HAS BEEN MILITARY -- INCREASED DEFENSE BUDGETS, TRANSFERS OF ARMS AND COVERT OPERATIONS. AS WE HAVE SEEN, OUR VAST MILITARY ARSENAL DOES NOT PROVIDE THE ANSWER TO AN ANGOLA OR A YOM KIPPUR WAR. SOMETHING ELSE IS NEEDED TO INSPIRE A CHANGE IN SOVIET POLICY. SUCH A CHANGE MIGHT OCCUR IF WE, TOGETHER WITH OUR ALLIES, ORGANIZED OUR TRADE WITH THE SOVIET UNION IN SUCH A WAY AS TO PROVIDE MAXIMUM POLITICAL LEVERAGE.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 197260 TOSEC 200230

6. TODAY, THE SOVIETS ARE MORE DEPENDENT ON THE TECHNOLOGY, MANAGERIAL KNOW-HOW AND EVEN THE FOOD OF THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES THAN AT ANY TIME IN THEIR HISTORY.

7. IN 1964 KHRUSHCHEV WAS OUSTED BECAUSE THE PRESIDUM DECIDED THAT HE HAD GONE TOO FAR WITH DE-STALINIZATION, POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. THEY CONCLUDED THAT THIS WAS LEADING IN A DANGEROUS DIRECTION, ESPECIALLY IN EASTERN EUROPE BUT ALSO IN THE U.S.S.R. ITSELF. THE RESULT WAS A TIGHTENING OF POLICE CONTROLS, MORE REPRESSION AND LESS INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS. IN ORDER TO COMPENSATE THE PEOPLE FOR THIS TIGHTENED POLITICAL CONTROL, THE PRESIDUM DECIDED TO SUPPLY MORE AND BETTER CONSUMER GOODS.

8. HOWEVER, THE SOVIET LEADERS FACED A CRUCIAL DILEMMA. THEIR SYSTEM IS RUN BY ONLY 7 PER CENT OF THE POPULATION, COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS MAINTAINED IN POWER BY THE SECRET POLICE AND THE COMMISSARS OF THE RED ARMY. THESE CADRES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AFRAID TO ALLOW THE SORT OF DECENTRALIZATION NEEDED TO MAKE THE ECONOMY FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY. IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE SOVIET ECONOMY COULD NOT PRODUCE THE PLANNED GOALS EITHER FOR CONSUMER INDUSTRY OR AGRICULTURE. THEREFORE, THE PRESIDIUM DECIDED TO MOVE AGGRESSIVELY FOR THE IMPORTATION OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY, CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AND, WHEN NECESSARY, GRAIN FROM THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES. THIS TRADE HAS BECOME A VITAL ELEMENT IN THE SOVIET CONCEPT OF DETENTE.

9. THE RESULTS HAVE BEEN GRATIFYING TO SOVIET PLANNERS. DESPITE SOME VERY BAD GRAIN HARVESTS AND INSTANCES OF LIMPING CONSUMER PRODUCTION, THERE HAS BEEN A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN FOOD AND IN SUCH PRODUCTS AS ELECTRIC STOVES, AUTOMOBILES, REFRIGERATORS, COLOR TELEVISION SETS AND AIR CONDITIONERS. ACCORDING TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, SOVIET PER CAPITA CEREAL CONSUMPTION INCREASED BY 30 PER CENT FROM 1964 TO 1974. THE TOTAL SOVIET PER CAPITA CONSUMPTION IS SECOND ONLY TO THAT OF THE UNITED STATES.

10. IN THE PAST, WHEN THE SOVIETS HAD A BAD HARVEST, THEY UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 197260 TOSEC 200230

TIGHTENED THEIR BELTS AND ACCEPTED LARGE-SCALE LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER, BUT TODAY, WHEN THE CROPS ARE BAD, THEY MAKE MASSIVE GRAIN PURCHASES IN THE WORLD MARKET AND THEIR LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT IS NOT AFFECTED.

11. IN 1975 THERE WERE NINE NATIONS WITH A GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT OF MORE THAN 100 BILLION DOLLARS, ACCOUNTING TOGETHER FOR MORE THAN 70 PER CENT OF THE WORLD'S ECONOMIC OUTPUT. THE U.S., WITH 1.5 TRILLION DOLLARS, HAD A GNP TWICE THAT OF THE U.S.S.R.'S 750 BILLION DOLLARS. JAPAN FOLLOWED WITH 450 BILLION DOLLARS, THEN WEST GERMANY WITH 375 BILLION DOLLARS, FRANCE WITH 270 BILLION DOLLARS, BRITAIN WITH 180 BILLION DOLLARS, CHINA WITH 178 BILLION DOLLARS, ITALY WITH 150 BILLION DOLLARS AND CANADA WITH 125 BILLION DOLLARS. (THESE ARE ALL APPROXIMATIONS.)

12. OF THE NINE THERE ARE ONLY TWO COMMUNIST NATIONS, THE U.S.S.R. AND CHINA. THEY ARE NOT PARTNERS, BUT ADVERSARIES. THE OTHER SEVEN ARE CLOSE ALLIES, WITH A TOTAL JOINT GNP OF OVER 3 TRILLION DOLLARS. IF THE NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM AND AUSTRALIA ARE ADDED, THE ECONOMIC STRENGTH OF THESE ALLIES IS MORE THAN THREE TIMES THAT OF THE U.S.S.R. AND ITS WARSAW PACT PARTNERS. THAT IS AN INCREDIBLE AMOUNT

OF ECONOMIC POWER, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT IS NOTED THAT NEARLY ALL THE TECHNOLOGY AND THE GRAIN SOUGHT BY THE U.S.S.R. ARE CONTROLLED BY THOSE NATIONS.

13. THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES HAVE A FORCEFUL AND LEGITIMATE INSTRUMENT OF POLITICAL LEVERAGE AT THEIR DISPOSAL, BUT HAVE DONE ALMOST NOTHING TO CONCERT THEIR ADVANTAGE. QUITE THE CONTRARY.

14. THE SOVIETS HAVE ALWAYS MAINTAINED A STATE TRADING MECHANISM RUN BY THE GOVERNMENT. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES WHEN TRADING WITH RUSSIA HAVE ALWAYS OPERATED ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE FREE MARKET, PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND COMPETITION. THIS IS NONSENSICAL WHEN DEALING WITH THE SOVIET BLOC BECAUSE NO SUCH MARKETPLACE EXISTS IN THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 197260 TOSEC 200230

15. SO WE HAVE THE IRONY OF THE RUSSIANS ENJOYING A DECISIVE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ADVANTAGE WHEN THE OPPOSITE SHOULD BE TRUE. AMERICAN, JAPANESE, GERMAN AND OTHER BUSINESSMEN COMPETE WITH EACH OTHER IN MOSCOW AND ARE WHIPSAWED BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT.

16. WHAT IS NEEDED IS AN ENTIRELY NEW APPROACH TO COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.S.R. WITH EMPHASIS ON THE FOREIGN POLICY CONSIDERATIONS. THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES WILL NEED TO ENGAGE IN JOINT PLANNING FOR EAST-WEST TRADE IN A MANNER SIMILAR TO THEIR JOINT MILITARY PLANNING IN NATO. FOR A WHILE, AT LEAST, GOVERNMENT CONTROLS WITH RESPECT TO SOVIET TRADE WILL HAVE TO BE INCREASED. INSTEAD OF THE NORMAL COMPETITION OF THE FREE MARKET, TRADE WITH THE U.S.S.R. WOULD BE REGULATED TO ENSURE MAXIMUM POLITICAL ADVANTAGE. THE ONLY WAY THIS CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED IS FOR THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES TO AGREE TO COOPERATE AND PLAN TOGETHER.

17. THE ORGANIZATION OF A JOINT TRADING CONSULTATIVE BODY SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE (COCOM) FORMED BY THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE COLD WAR TO WITHHOLD, THROUGH EXPORT CONTROL, TRADE WHICH WOULD CONTRIBUTE DIRECTLY TO SOVIET MILITARY POTENTIAL. STRATEGIC TRADE CONTROLS DO HAVE SOME LIMITED SIGNIFICANCE IN A NARROW FIELD OF MILITARY TECHNOLOGY, BUT THIS PROPOSAL GOES FAR BEYOND THE COCOM CONCEPT. THERE WOULD BE A PLANNING MECHANISM FOR EAST-WEST TRADE WITH STRESS ON THE TECHNOLOGY OF CONSUMER PRODUCTION AND GRAIN TRADE. THAT IS WHERE THE POLITICAL LEVERAGE CAN BE FOUND.

18. IT WILL BE ARGUED THAT ORGANIZING AN EFFECTIVE EAST-WEST TRADE MECHANISM AMONG THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES PRESENTS EXTRAORDINARY PROBLEMS. THAT IS SO, BUT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT COOPERATIVE VENTURES HAVE BEEN CONSTRUCTED IN THE PAST. EXAMPLES INCLUDE THE EUROPEAN RECOVERY PROGRAM, NATO AND THE COMMON MARKET.

19. IT IS A QUESTION OF RAISING OUR SIGHTS AND CHANGING OUR PRIORITIES BY DIRECTLY LINKING EAST-WEST TRADE TO UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 197260 TOSEC 200230

THE GOAL OF ENDING THE COLD WAR. TRADE WITH THE RUSSIANS SHOULD HAVE THE SAME PRIORITY TREATMENT IN OUR PLANNING AS IS GIVEN TO THE DEFENSE PROGRAM.

20. THE CHANGE IN APPROACH WILL PROBABLY BE MOST DIFFICULT WITH RESPECT TO GRAIN TRADE. IN 1972-1973, WHEN SOVIET HARVESTS WERE VERY BAD, THE RUSSIANS WERE ALLOWED TO MOVE INTO THE U.S. MARKET FOR THE "GREAT GRAIN ROBBERY." THE AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT GAVE ITS BLESSING TO DEALS AT VERY FAVORABLE PRICES -- FOR MOSCOW. THE RESULT WAS THAT U.S. BREAD AND MEAT PRICES SKYROCKETED AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WAS UNDERSTANDABLY ENRAGED. TO AVERT MORE SUCH BLUNDERS, THE U.S. IN 1975 SIGNED A FIVE-YEAR ACCORD IN WHICH THE SOVIET UNION AGREED TO BUY RELATIVELY CONSTANT AMOUNTS OF GRAIN EACH YEAR TO REDUCE FLUCTUATIONS IN THE PRICE OF U.S. GRAIN. THIS IS A SENSIBLE PROTECTIVE MEASURE, BUT DOES NOT RELATE TO THE CONCEPT OF USING THE GRAIN TRADE FOR POLITICAL PURPOSE.

21. LAST JANUARY PRESIDENT FORD, SPEAKING TO THE FARM BUREAU, SAID, "... THE SOVIET ATTEMPT TO TAKE UNILATERAL ADVANTAGE OF THE ANGOLAN PROBLEM IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS. HOWEVER ... THERE IS NOT THE SLIGHTEST DOUBT THAT, IF WE TRIED TO USE GRAIN FOR LEVERAGE, THE SOVIETS COULD GET ALONG WITHOUT AMERICAN GRAIN AND IGNORE OUR VIEWS. THE LINKAGE OF GRAIN WOULD MEAN DISRUPTION AND HARDSHIP FOR YOU. THE FARMER, A SERIOUS INCREASE IN TENSIONS BETWEEN THE TWO SUPERPOWERS AND NO EFFECT ON ANGOLA."

22. GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCES AT THE TIME, PRESIDENT FORD WAS PROBABLY CORRECT, ESPECIALLY BECAUSE THE U.S. HAD ALSO INTERVENED IN ANGOLA THROUGH THE CIA AND WAS DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH FORCES SUPPORTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA. THE U.S. POLITICAL POSITION WAS SO UNTENABLE THAT ITS CHALLENGE TO THE SOVIETS WAS IMPOTENT. IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT, IN THE FACE OF A U.S. GRAIN EMBARGO, THE RUSSIANS PROBABLY COULD HAVE OBTAINED MOST OF THEIR NEEDS FROM THE TWO OTHER MAJOR SOURCES, CANADA AND AUSTRALIA.

23. BUT IN THE FUTURE THERE COULD BE AN ENTIRELY DIF-

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 197260 TOSEC 200230

FERENT SCENARIO. THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES COULD DECIDE TO END THE COLD WAR -- NO MORE CLANDESTINE INVOLVEMENTS SUCH AS OCCURRED IN ANGOLA. THE U.S. AND ITS ALLIES WOULD ALSO COOPERATE IN A JOINT EAST-WEST TRADE ORGANIZATION. IF A GRAIN BOYCOTT WERE DESIRABLE, THE U.S. WOULD ACT IN CONCERT WITH AUSTRALIA AND CANADA. IF THE SOVIETS TRIED AGAIN TO MOVE WITH CUBAN PROXY FORCES, THEY WOULD BE CONFRONTED WITH A POTENT ECONOMIC FORCE.

24. IN ORDER REALISTICALLY TO CONSIDER EMPLOYING THE ECONOMIC DETERRENT IT WILL BE ESSENTIAL, AT LEAST FOR A TIME, TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE WHO MIGHT BE HURT BY A CURTAILMENT OF GRAIN AND TECHNOLOGY EXPORTS TO RUSSIA. THE UNITED STATES HAS A LONG HISTORY OF SUBSIDIZING ITS AGRICULTURE AND DEFENSE PROGRAMS WHEN THAT SEEMED TO BE IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST. RECENTLY, THE NIXON-BUTZ POLICIES HAVE PURSUED LAISSEZ-FAIRE ECONOMICS IN GRAIN MARKETING, BUT IRONICALLY THOSE POLICIES WORKED IN 1975 MAINLY BECAUSE OF THE VERY LARGE RUSSIAN GRAIN PURCHASES.

25. IN THE PERIOD FROM THE AAA OF 1933 TO 1969, HOWEVER, THE U.S. HELD PUBLICLY FINANCED GRAIN RESERVES WITH GENERALLY POSITIVE RESULTS. ANOTHER VERY CREATIVE SUBSIDY OF AGRICULTURE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAS BEEN THE PL 480 PROGRAM TO SEND FOOD TO POOR COUNTRIES. THE BIGGEST U.S. SUBSIDY PROGRAMS, BY FAR, HAVE BEEN PENTAGON CONTRACTS WITH U.S. DEFENSE INDUSTRIES IN WHICH THE AMERICAN TAXPAYER INSURES SUBSTANTIAL PROFITS BY PROVIDING FOR GENEROUS OVERHEAD, COST OVER-RUNS AND PROTECTION AGAINST THE RISKS OF INFLATION.

26. IN 1975 THE UNITED STATES HAD EXPORTS TO RUSSIA WORTH 1,833 MILLION DOLLARS, ALMOST TWO THIRDS OF WHICH WAS GRAIN. GERMANY WAS IN FIRST PLACE WITH EXPORTS OF 2,824 MILLION DOLLARS. JAPAN HAD 1,626 MILLION DOLLARS, FRANCE 1,145 MILLION DOLLARS, ITALY 1,000 MILLION DOLLARS, THE UNITED KINGDOM 463 MILLION DOLLARS, BELGIUM 325 MILLION DOLLARS AND CANADA 325 MILLION DOLLARS. TO HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT LEVERAGE ON SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY, THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES WOULD HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO DIVERT AND/OR SUBSIDIZE AT LEAST TWO-THIRDS OF THEIR EXPORTS TO THE

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 STATE 197260 TOSEC 200230

U.S.S.R., INCLUDING ALL GRAIN AND MOST MODERN TECHNOLOGY -- A FIGURE AMOUNTING TO ABOUT 6.5 BILLION DOLLARS ANNUALLY.

27. OBVIOUSLY, SUCH A PROGRAM WOULD ONLY MAKE SENSE IF

IT INVOLVED A NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT FOR THE PURPOSE OF BRINGING THE COLD WAR TO AN END. IF THAT WERE ACCOM-

PLISHED, WE WOULD HAVE TRUE DETENTE AND THE SAVINGS IN OUR BUDGETS FOR DEFENSE AND THE CIA WOULD MORE THAN COVER ANY NECESSARY SUBSIDIES.

28. IN ALL PROBABILITY, THOUGH, THE TRADE WEAPON WOULD NOT NEED TO BE USED MORE THAN ONCE, AND PERHAPS NEVER, BECAUSE THE SOVIETS ARE TOO DEPENDENT ON A CONTINUATION OF THE FLOW OF TECHNOLOGY AND GRAIN FROM THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES TO RISK THE CONSEQUENCES OF A CUTOFF.

29. SANITY REQUIRES A TWO-FOLD PROCESS. THERE SHOULD BE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS FOR A MUTUAL PHASE-OUT OF CLANDESTINE WARFARE AND ARMS TRANSFERS TO THE NATIONS OF THE THIRD WORLD. AT THE SAME TIME, THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES SHOULD INDICATE A WILLINGNESS TO INCREASE EAST-WEST TRADE SUBSTANTIALLY IF THE SOVIETS GIVE UP THEIR CONSPIRATORIAL ADVENTURES ABROAD. SUCH A CONCERTED POLICY UNQUESTIONABLY WOULD INSPIRE A SIGNIFICANT STRUGGLE WITHIN THE KREMLIN. SOME OF THE OLD BOLSHEVIKS AND KGB LEADERS WOULD HOLD OUT FOR THE DECAYING IDEOLOGICAL WORLD VIEW, BUT IT IS A GOOD BET THAT, IN TIME, THE MORE PRAGMATIC MODERATES WOULD HAVE THEIR WAY. END TEXT. HABIB

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